

I believe that basic human rights and fundamental freedoms must be upheld and respected around the world, in every nation and in every community. No child should have to suffer unnecessarily simply because of where he or she was born. I also believe that poverty is one of the root causes of extremism around the globe. The United States must be a leader in the international arena through investments in diplomacy, economic and social development, political stability, and democratic representation. In addition, our international policies must be part of our comprehensive national security strategy. In order to ensure security at home, we must address the root causes of extremism by fostering development and freedom abroad.

Each year, millions of people throughout the world suffer without needed health care and education, and basic freedoms. It is unacceptable that each year millions of lives are lost due to infectious diseases, malnutrition, and complications of pregnancy and childbirth, and it is unacceptable that each year thousands of people are threatened, attacked, and silenced simply for standing up for what they believe in. I am a strong supporter of assistance that fosters stable governments that provide essential services and respect human rights. I have also introduced legislation to improve global health care by promoting the development of health products that are affordable, culturally appropriate, and easy to use in low-resource health systems.

In the fight against terrorism, our country's men and women continue to risk their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite several years of commitment, stability remains elusive in Iraq and real advancement in Afghanistan is still in question. I believe progress in the region is achievable, only with capable, accountable partners. As you may know, I advocated for firm timelines and increased accountability in Iraq. In Afghanistan, I believe these elements are also critical. The plan for increased resources and only a vague timeline for Afghanistan will continue to strain our national budget and put an additional 30,000 men and women in harm's way.

It is important that the Afghan people view us as a dedicated partner, but offering unconditional, unending military support is not the answer. We must pursue a strategy that supports the creation of a secure and stable Afghanistan, a strategy that looks beyond the current political failings and works towards a strong democratic future. Only with a successful Afghanistan can our enemies truly be defeated and regional security be achieved.

I believe that the United States is a global leader, and should act as such. To promote global security and global prosperity, we must support our basic tenants of opportunity, human rights, and democracy to foster genuine relationships with international actors. I have been a strong advocate for the use of our foreign assistance as an integral part of our overall national security

strategy and foreign policy. I am proud to be a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and I am eager to develop the next generation of foreign assistance through pending foreign assistance reform. We must create an overarching strategy that compliments our existing programs and ensures they fit with the democratic and humanitarian goals and ideals of the United States.